Radio on Stamps

By J. DOUGLAS KAY (G3AAE)*

WHEN Rowland Hill instituted the Penny Post, resulting in the issue, in 1840, of the first adhesive postage stamp, no thought could surely have been farther from his mind than that one day postage stamps would feature radio pioneers and apparatus as their design, and would be used to pay postage on QSL cards. Over half a century had to pass before the first radio transmission was made. In spite of this, however, the development of the design of stamps has run a closely parallel course in time to the development and progress of radio in its many forms. It is, therefore, not surprising that this rapidly expanding science has been recognised on the stamps of many countries.

A special 75 centimes stamp was issued by France on February 27th, 1936, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the death of the famous French scientist André-Marie Ampère.

The Pioneers

Appropriately enough, most of the first radio stamps issued bore portraits of those pioneers of the early days. In 1927 Italy issued a stamp commemorating the centenary of the death of Volta, and followed this in 1934 by two stamps to mark the first international congress of Electro-Radio-Biology, featuring a very fine portrait of Luigi Galvani. This is Galvani's only appearance on a stamp, but Volta appeared again on an Italian stamp issued in 1949 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of his inventing the electric cell. Here two values were issued, one showing Volta and the other what is supposed to be a voltaic pile.

The centenary of the death of Ampère was marked by the issue by France of a stamp bearing his likeness, and the great Marconi, who in 1895 began his series of experiments in radio transmission, and who has the added distinction of being the only R.S.G.B. member to appear on a postage stamp (he was an Honorary member from 1914 until his death in 1937), was honoured on a stamp issued by Italy in 1938. He was similarly honoured in 1947 when Italy issues a series of stamps showing land and ship radio masts and a radio equipped aircraft, to mark the 50th anniversary of the commencement of his radio discoveries.

Italy issued three stamps in January 1938 in memory of Senatore Marconi whose death occurred during the previous year.

Not to be outdone the U.S.S.R. in 1945 issued a set of stamps to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Popov's radio discoveries. Not only is Popov pictured on these stamps, but two values show him lecturing, and incorporate in their design a supposed theoretical circuit diagram and some antediluvian apparatus. Russia again honoured Popov philatelically in 1951.

Other pioneers whose faces have adorned stamps have mostly been featured by the United States. In the 1940 series honouring famous American scientists, the two cent stamp showed Samuel Morse and the ten cent value Alexander Graham Bell, and by some strange coincidence these two were together again in 1944 on a set

* 18 Fairfield Way, Barnet, Herts.

The specially designed card produced for use during the 25th anniversary meeting of the International Amateur Radio Union (I.A.R.U.) held in Paris in May, 1950. The inventor of Semaphore (Claude Chappe) is featured on the stamp affixed to the card.

of stamps issued by Argentina in aid of a postman's benefit fund. Bell has also appeared on a Canadian stamp issued in 1947 to commemorate the centenary of his inventing the telephone.

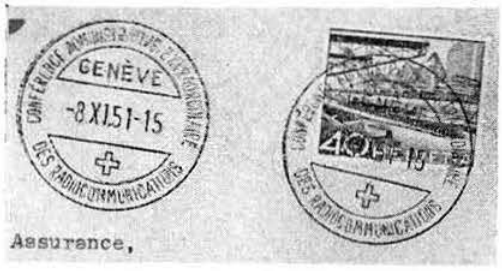
In the broadest sense semaphore could be included in the general heading of Communications, and its inventor, Claude Chappe, appeared on a French stamp in 1944, the 150th anniversary of his invention. While on this sidetrack perhaps a Gold Coast stamp issued in 1948 and showing a negro tapping a drum, could be included as "bush-telegraphy."

Italy commemorated the 50th anniversary of wireless communication by the issue of a series of stamps each with a radio theme.

Telegraphy

The first telegraphic apparatus in South America was featured on a two cent air stamp issued in 1944 by Paraguay, and the centenary of the telegraph is commemorated by a U.S. stamp of 1944 picturing a close-up of a telegraph pole. India recently reached the centenary of her first use of the telegraph, and two stamps have just been issued to mark the anniversary. Apart from stamps about the telegraph, numerous stamps have been issued from time to time to pay the cost of telegrams. These take various forms of overprints and cancellations as well as special stamps, but none could be of more interest than those issued in 1898 by the Sudan. The bi-coloured stamps show a contingent of the famous Sudan Camel Corps passing alongside a telegraph line running through the desert. These stamps are of horizontal rectangular format, and are perforated into two equal halves by a vertical line of holes puncturing the stamps. The telegraph form was also punctured vertically, and the idea was that the holes on the stamp and the form should coincide, and one half of the form and attached half stamp should be retained by the telegram filer as his receipt. These stamps are sometimes found used, but still unsevered, and there is no doubt that this can be attributed to philatelically-minded telegraph office employees. The last stamp to feature the telegraph saw the light of day in 1947 when a stamp was issued picturing a tape machine and a representation of the world surrounded by tape.

Radio navigation is represented by inclusion by Newfoundland of the trans-atlantic radio beacon at Cape Race on one value of a set of stamps issued in 1932, and by Falkland Island stamps showing the research ships *William Scoresby* and *Discovery II*, both bristling with radio apparatus.



This is the postmark applied to mail posted by delegates to the important I.T.U. Radio Administrative Conference held in Geneva during 1950.

Telephony

The interests of the "phone" man are catered for by South Africa, who included in their War Effort set of 1941, a 1/3 stamp showing a tank operator working an R.T. set, and by Japan, who, in 1950, celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Japanese broadcasting system by issuing one value depicting two microphones, one of 1925 vintage and the other of the latest design.

Broadcasting has only recently appeared in the philatelic world, and perhaps the station of most interest is Radio Luxembourg which is featured on a stamp of Luxembourg showing the transmitting building and the aerial arrays. Denmark has celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Kalunborg transmitting station, and in 1951 Monaco produced three stamps publicising the Monte Carlo radio station. In this latter case some sort

The Egyptian Government issued three stamps to mark the occasion of the International Telecommunication Union Conference held in Cairo during 1937.

of *entente cordiale* appears to have existed as Monte Carlo Radio used to broadcast a short programme for philatelists. Incidentally no aspect of British broadcasting has yet been featured on a stamp.

The first stamp to mention television came from Switzerland, where in 1952 four stamps were

The special postmark struck in connection with the VIIth Plenary Assembly of the International Radio Consultative Committee (C.C.I.R.) held in London during September, 1953.

produced marking the centenary of telecommunications. The four values are devoted to the telegraph, telephone, radio and television—the latter shown as an eye. A multiple radio design set also came from Italy in 1947 when six stamps were issued showing wireless masts, a ship's aerial and an aeroplane equipped with wireless. Wireless masts are a firm favourite with stamp designers and have appeared at various times on the stamps of Honduras, Guatemala, Ascension, and Barbados among others.

Just before Christmas 1938, France issued a special stamp in connection with an appeal for funds to provide sets for blind wireless listeners. The face value was 95c.+25c. tax, the latter amount being handed over to the "Wireless for the Blind" Fund.

Legislation

Radio legislation is marked by the Egyptian stamps issued in connection with the 1938 International Telecommunications Conference in Cairo. The design is quite ingenious and features wireless arrays against a background of the Pyramids of Giza and the Colossus of Thebes. The International Radio Conference held in Florence in 1950 attained philatelic perpetuity by the issuing of two stamps, one showing Florence Town Hall, and the other a wireless mast. The anniversary of the I.T.U. was commemorated by Vietnam in 1952 and the stamp they produced for the occasion shows a globe with a representation of a wireless wave superimposed.

Completely different was the stamp issued by France in 1938 in aid of their wireless for the blind fund, and showing a blind wireless listener.

There are no doubt many other radio stamps, but even those detailed above show the extent to which radio and allied subjects have been favoured by stamp designers. In addition to this, various postmarks have been produced to mark occasions of radio interest, and perhaps two of the most interesting are the special postmarks issued for the I.A.R.U. Convention in Paris in 1950 and the C.C.I.R. 7th Assembly held in London last year. Still with the accent on Amateur Radio, of note is the special cover used in the Pitcairn Islands to mark the establishment of PITC—the Voice of Pitcairn Island. The coloured picture on the envelope's front shows a straw thatched wooden hut—no doubt the transmitting station, and a man beside the door. Undoubtedly this man is Andrew Young, VR6AY, who not only ran PITC, but also vied with AC4YN in pre-war days as the world's choicest DX.

The final reference is to the stamp that gave birth to this article—the 1953 New Zealand Health stamps with their Morse Code border and pictures of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, and so should it be for radio and philately are still young, and the wonders of communication yet to be attained may well surpass those that have already been achieved.

A distinctive postmark was used to mark the occasion of the D.A.R.C. Amateur Radio Convention held in Iserlohn, Germany, during August, 1953.

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lector voltage for a collector current of 2 mA is less than 3 volts. When this condition is achieved, the following parameters are checked :

(1) At −10 volts on the collector, the collector current must change by more than 2 mA for a 0-1 mA change in emitter current (i.e. a current gain greater than 2).
(2) Collector current at −30 volts with no emitter current flowing must be less than 2 mA.
(3) A collector voltage of at least −30 volts must be possible without instability when the emitter is short-circuited to base.

Stability Tests

When the above specification has been satisfied, the triodes are temperature cycled several times between room temperature and +60° C. After this test they are run at a collector dissipation higher than the rated figure for several days and then left in storage for a considerable time before the above-mentioned parameters are re-checked prior to despatch.

Conclusion

Although the construction of a transistor has many critical phases and requires great precision in its assembly, the finished product does not possess any such critical properties and is very stable and robust. Transistors can be wired in circuit in a manner similar to any other piece of apparatus and because of their robustness no special provision need be made for mounting.

Operating conditions for transistors are not critical, and there is no warming-up time as there is with indirectly heated thermionic valves; the transistor operates as soon as the supply voltages are applied.